

Message Text

SECRET

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 5068

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E.O. 11652: GDS
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SUBJECT: DAYAN ON LEBANON

REF: A) TEL AVIV 4995, B) BEIRUT 3240

SUMHARY: FOLLOWING ON BEGIN'S EXTENSIVE REMARKS TO ME (REF A), DAYAN HAS ALSO NOW TOLD ME HE IS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT EVENTS IN SOUTH LEBANON AND SEES AN URGENT NEED FOR US/ISRAELI CONSULTATIONS. WHILE REAFFIRMING THAT ISRAEL DOES NOT WANT TO OCCUPY ANY LEBANESE TERRITORY, HE TOLD ME BLUNTLY THAT ISRAEL IS CARRYING OUT LIMITED MILITARY OPERATIONS IN SOUTH LEBANON AS REQUIRED, AND IS DOING SO NOT ONLY TO PROTECT THE CHRISTIANS BUT ALSO TO PREVENT A BUILD UP FOR PALESTINIAN OPERATIONS ACROSS THE BORDER. ISRAEL HAD HOPED THAT THE WAR IN LEBANON WOULD HAVE THE RESULT OF PREVENTING A RETURN TO THE PREVIOUS PALESTINIAN CROSS-BORDER THREAT, BUT THAT HAS NOT OCCURRED. HE AGREES THERE MUST BE A NEW LEBANESE ARMY, AND THAT US ASSISTANCE TO IT IS THE MOST DESIRABLE OPTION, BUT INSISTS THAT LEBANESE POLICY GOVERNING ITS OPERATIONS MUST NOT BE ONE WHICH PERMITS THE PALESTINIANS TO REMAIN IN STRENGTH NEAR THE ISRAELI FRONTIER. DAYAN SUGGESTS WE LOOK MORE SERIOUSLY AT THE POSSIBILITY OF USING UN FORCES, PLUS A BUFFER ZONE, ALONG THE MODEL

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OF THE SYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN FRONTS. END SUMMARY.

1. WHEN I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN JULY 11, HE OPENED THE MEETING BY SAYING HE DOES NOT FEEL GOOD ABOUT LEBANON AND THAT ISRAEL AND THE U.S. SHOULD CO-ORDINATE THEIR POLICIES BETTER. ISRAEL THINKS IT IS DOING THE RIGHT THING, BUT DOES NOT SEEM TO BE

SUPPORTED BY THE U.S. DAYAN SAID HE SUGGESTED TO BEGIN THAT HE BRING UP THE SUBJECT OF LEBANON WHILE HE IS IN WASHINGTON BUT, OF COURSE, THERE MAY NOT BE TIME TO GIVE IT THE ATTENTION IT DESERVES. DAYAN SAID HE WOULD LIKE US TO HAVE A THOROUGH MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT ISRAEL IS DOING AND NOT DOING.

2. I SAID I AGREED COMPLETELY AND THAT I HAD URGED BEGIN TO RAISE LEBANON WITH THE PRESIDENT. THE NEED FOR CLOSE CONSULTATIONS IS ESPECIALLY URGENT NOW WITH NEW ADMINISTRATIONS IN BOTH CAPITALS, AND THERE NEEDS TO BE SOME HIGH LEVEL TALK ON THE SUBJECT. I SAID THAT THERE WOULD BE TIME, AND HAD URGED BEGIN TO PREPARE FOR THE SUBJECT. I ALSO SAID I HAD ALREADY ALERTED WASHINGTON, AND THAT I WOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT AGAIN WITH DAYAN AFTER MY RETURN. I SAID THAT AMBASSADOR PARKER'S REPORTING FROM BEIRUT INDICATES THAT HE HAS CONTINUED TO REASSURE SARKIS AND OTHER LEBANESE REGARDING WHAT ISRAEL IS AND IS NOT DOING IN THE SOUTH.

3. DAYAN REPEATED THAT ISRAEL DOES NOT WANT ANY PART OF LEBANON. IT DOES WANT SOUTH LEBANON TO BE FREE OF CLASHES AND TENSION, AND ISRAEL ALSO DOES NOT WANT TO SEE THE PALESTINIANS IN THE SOUTH; THE
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PALESTINIANS HAVE ONLY ONE AIM AND THAT IS TO ATTACK ISRAEL. ISRAEL WILL NOT STAND ASIDE WHEN THE VILLAGERS COME TO THEM FOR HELP. DAYAN SAID ISRAEL MUST AND WILL DO WHAT IS NECESSARY TO HELP THE CHRISTIAN VILLAGERS.

4. DAYAN CONTINUED THAT IS MORE IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, TO SEARCH FOR A BROADER SOLUTION. THE BEST WAY TO BRING STABILITY TO THE SOUTH IS TO HAVE A GOOD LEBANESE FORCE. IF THE LEBANESE CENTRAL AUTHORITIES WERE IN A GOOD MILITARY SITUATION AND COULD PREVENT A PALESTINIAN TAKEOVER IN THE SOUTH THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM. THE QUESTION FOR ISRAEL, HOWEVER, IS WHAT WILL HAPPEN UNTIL THERE IS A STRONG CENTRAL AUTHORITY IN LEBANON. ISRAEL HAS SEEN WEAK LEBANESE FORCES IN THE PAST GIVE WAY TO STRONGER PALESTINIANS IN THE SOUTH. THIS LED TO OPERATIONS BY THE PALESTINIANS ACROSS THE BORDER AND ISRAEL THEN FELT IT HAD TO RETALIATE, AND MILITARY OPERATIONS FOLLOWED. ISRAEL HAD HOPED THAT THE WAR IN LEBANON WOULD PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY NOT TO GO BACK TO THE OLD SITUATION. THIS REMAINS ISRAEL'S

PRIMARY CONCERN: IT DOES NOT SEEK A CHANGE IN THE BOUNDARY; IT DOES SEEK TO PREVENT A RETURN TO THE PREVIOUS SITUATION. ISRAEL IS AWARE THAT THE LEBANESE ALSO DO NOT WANT A RETURN TO THE PREVIOUS SITUATION BUT HAVE CURRENTLY NO POWER TO PREVENT IT.

5. I SAID THERE MUST BE A SOVEREIGN LEBANON AND THAT IT MUST HAVE AN ARMY. THIS IS A BASIC PREMISE OF OUR POLICY, AND I REMINDED HIM THAT WE ARE CONSIDERING TRYING TO HELP BUILD SUCH AN ARMY. WE ARE THINKING OF A THREE-YEAR PLAN INVOLVING SOME LIGHT EQUIPMENT AND SOME TRAINING TO CREATE A FORCE OF THREE BRIGADES. THE CONGRESS IS SKEPTICAL BUT WOULD PROBABLY NOT OPPOSE THIS PLAN
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IF THE LEBANESE THEMSELVDS WANT OUR HELP AND IF ISRAEL THINKS OUR HELP WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA. WE CANNOT, OF COURSE, GUARANTEE THAT THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM WOULD BE SOLVED WHEN THE THREE BRIGADES ARE OPERATIONAL.

6. DAYAN REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT AGREE ENTIRELY WITH OUR THINKING. IT IS TRUE THERE MUST BE A LEBANESE ARMY IF AUTHORITY IS TO BE MAINTAINED. HOWEVER, IF THE POLICY OF SUCH A LEBANON ARMY WOULD BE TO COOPERATE WITH THE PALESTINIANS AND TO ENFORCE THE CAIRO AGREEMENT, ISRAEL CANNOT AGREE. HE COMMENTED THAT THE CAIRO AGREEMENT DOES NOT SEEM TO ANSWER THE PRESENT PROBLEM BECAUSE IT REFERRED TO THE PALESTINIANS IN CAMPS, WHILE THE PALESTINIAN FIGHTERS ARE NOT CONFINED TO CAMPS BUT ARE STATIONED NEAR THE SOUTH BORDER IN LEBANESE VILLAGES. ISRAEL WOULD HAVE NO PROBLEM IF THE PALESTINIANS WERE IN THEIR CAMPS, WERE SUPPORTED BY UNRWA; THEY CLEARLY MUST BE SOMPLACE. BUT WHEN THEY ARE CONCENTRATING THEIR MILITARY UNITS IN VILLAGES IN THE SOUTH, ISRAEL CANNOT WAIT FOR THE ATTACKS WHICH ARE SURE TO COME. ISRAEL CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO LIVE WITH THIS SITUATION, AND HE REPEATED THAT HE HAD HOPED THAT ALL SIDES WOULD USE THE WAR IN LEBANON TO BRING ABOUT A CHANGE FROM THE PREVIOUS SITUATION. ISRAEL CANNOT ACCEPT THE IDEA THAT A NEW LEBANESE ARMY WOULD COOPERATE WITH THE PALESTINIANS TO LEGALIZE THE DANGEROUS PALESTINIAN PRESENCE IN THE SOUTH.

7. I POINTED OUT THAT THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT HAS NO ENFORCEMENT POWER AT THE PRESENT TIME. ONLY THE SYRIANS CAN ENFORCE DECISIONS, AND ISRAEL HAD SAID
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THE SYRIANS COULD NOT BE PERMITTED NEAR THE BORDER.
THESE SEEM TO BE THE ONLY TWO POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS.

8. DAYAN AGREED THAT THE PALESTINIANS ARE IN SOUTH
LEBANON IN SPITE OF AND AGAINST THE WILL OF THE
VILLAGERS AND THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT, BUT HE SAID
THERE IS A THIRD OPTION: IF LEBANESE FORCES ARE NOT
STRONG ENOUGH, AND IF THE SYRIANS DO NOT USE THEIR

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OVERWHELMING LEVERAGE ON THE PALESTINIANS TO MAKE
THEM PULL BACK, THEN ISRAELI FORCES WILL CROSS THE
BORDER WHEN NECESSARY TO HELP THE VILLAGERS. ISRAEL
CANNOT LET THE SITUATION DEVELOP INTO ANOTHER MA'ALOT.
HE SAID FLATLY THAT IN THE PRESENT SITUATION ISRAELI
FORCES CROSS THE BORDER AT TIMES; FOR BRIEF INCURSIONS
BOTH TO HELP THE CHRISTIANS AND TO ENSURE THERE ARE
NO PALESTINIAN RAIDS AGAINST ISRAEL. THE SITUATION IS
OBVIOUSLY DANGEROUS, AND ARGUES FOR THOROUGH
DISCUSSION WITH THE U.S.

9. I ASKED WHETHER THE CHRISTIANS COULD NOT DEFEND
THEMSELVES WITH ISRAELI SUPPLIES ALONE, RATHER THAN
TROOPS. HE SAID HE BELIEVED THEY COULD, BUT THAT
THEY THINK NOT. THEY SAY THAT UNLESS THE IDF HELPS
THEM THEY CANNOT STAND UP TO THE PALESTINIANS,
ALTHOUGH IT WOULD BE BETTER IF THEY COULD. HE SAID

HE REALIZED THIS PRESENTS A POTENTIAL CONFLICT WITH
U.S. VIEWS BECAUSE WE ARE ADVISING THE LEBANESE IN
BEIRUT NOT TO TURN TO THE ISRAELIS FOR ASSISTANCE.

10. I SAID I WAS NOT CERTAIN, BUT THAT IT WAS MY
IMPRESSION WE WERE CONTINUOUSLY TRYING TO REASSURE
THE LEBANESE ABOUT ISRAELI INTENTIONS; WHILE PERHAPS
DISCOURAGING THEM FROM SEEKING OVERT ISRAELI

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ASSISTANCE BECAUSE THIS MIGHT TRIGGER SOME REACTION
BY THE SYRIANS. I ASKED HIM SPECIFICALLY WHAT THE
CHRISTIANS ARE SAYING TO THE ISRAELIS ABOUT AMERICAN
VIEWS. DAYAN ADMITTED THAT IT IS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR,
BUT THE CHRISTIANS SEEM TO BE TELLING THE ISRAELIS
THAT AMERICANS ARE ADVISING THEM NOT TO TURN TO
ISRAEL. I SAID THAT SOME CHRISTIANS ARE SAYING TO
US IN BEIRUT THAT ISRAELI FORCES ARE ABOUT TO CROSS
THE BORDER, AND OCCUPY A PART OF LEBANON.

11. IN RESPONSE, DAYAN SAID EXPLICITLY THAT ISRAEL
DOES INDEED CROSS THE BORDER: "SOMETIMES BY
FIRING, SOMETIMES WITH PATROLS, AND SOMETIMES WITH
BRIEF BUT BIGGER OPERATIONS." HE SAID ISRAEL CARRIES OUT
OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTH FOR TWO REASONS: FIRST, TO
HELP THE CHRISTIANS PROTECT THEMSELVES
AND, SECOND, IN ISRAEL'S OWN INTERESTS TO STRIKE
AGAINST CONCENTRATIONS OF PALESTINIAN FORCES WHICH
WILL OTHERWISE BE USED AGAINST ISRAEL. HOWEVER,
ISRAEL AND THE U.S. NEED TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE AND
FOR SOME STABILITY IN THE AREA. THERE IS A NEED
FOR A LEBANESE ARMY, BUT LEBANON MUST AGREE
EVENTUALLY TO MOVE THE PALESTINAINS AWAY FROM THE
BORDER.

12. I SAID I AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE BEST TO HAVE
THE PALESTINIANS MOVED AWAY FROM THE BORDER BUT
ASKED WHETHER THIS WOULD BE POSSIBLE. DAYAN REPEATED
THAT THE U.S. MUST UNDERSTAND THAT AS LONG AS
LEBANESE FORCES CANNOT MOVE AGAINST THE PALESTINIANS,
AND THE SYRIANS DO NOT PREVENT THEIR MOVEMENT SOUTH,
ISRAEL WILL ASSURE THEY DO NOT POSE A CROSS-BORDER
THREAT. THIS IS NOT A GOOD IDEA, BUT HE KNOWS OF

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NO BETTER SOLUTION. I SAID IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE

PRIME MINISTER AND THE PRESIDENT MUST TALK OUT THIS SITUATION AND THAT BEGIN SHOULD MAKE CLEAR TO THE PRESIDENT HIS VIEWS OF ISRAEL'S NEED TO TAKE SOME ACTION.

13. DAYAN THEN SAID THAT IN CONSIDERING OTHER COURSES, PERHAPS WE SHOULD THINK ABOUT UN FORCES. I SAID THAT THIS POSSIBILITY HAD BEEN GIVEN SOME CONSIDERATION, BUT THERE SEEMED TO BE A GOOD DEAL OF SKEPTICISM ABOUT IT. DAYAN SAID THAT IN THE PAST THERE HAD BEEN ONLY UN OBSERVERS IN SOUTH LEBANON. WHAT IS NEEDED IS A SITUATION LIKE THAT ALONG THE SYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN BORDERS WHERE UN FORCES SEE THAT NO TROOP CONCENTRATIONS ARE BUILT UP. THERE COULD BE LEBANESE POLICE FORCES OR MILITARY UNITS FOR CIVILIAN CONTROL AS WELL, BUT THERE MUST BE SOME AGREED INTERNATIONAL FORCES AND A BUFFER ZONE. HE SAID HE HAD THE FEELING THAT NO ONE IS GIVING ANY SERIOUS THOUGHT TO THE SOUTH OF LEBANON.

14. I REPLIED THAT A GREAT DEAL OF THOUGHT HAD BEEN GIVEN TO THE SITUATION BUT NO REAL SOLUTIONS HAD BEEN FOUND. A STRONG CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WAS ALSO A MAJOR NEED, AND BEIRUT APPEARS TO BE MOVING SLOWLY IN THAT DIRECTION. DAYAN FELT THIS WAS LESS SERIOUS FOR ISRAEL BECAUSE IF BEIRUT CANNOT RUN THE COUNTRY THEN SYRIA WILL. BUT THE SECURITY OF THE BOUNDARY WITH ISRAEL IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM.

15. I SAID I WOULD URGE EXPLORATION AGAIN OF THE UN POSSIBILITY, BUT I BELIEVED THAT LEBANESE THEMSELVES WERE SKEPTICAL. THERE SEEMED TO BE A LACK OF CONFIDENCE THAT THE PALESTINIANS CAN BE ROOTED OUT BY ANYONE. THERE IS ALSO THE PROBLEM OF RAISING MORE UN TROOPS FOR SERIOUS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS. DAYAN SAID THAT CLEARLY THE SYRIANS
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WOULD HAVE TO SUPPORT FULLY ANY UN FORCE FOR IT TO BE EFFECTIVE. HE ASKED THAT I DISCUSS THIS PROBLEM IN WASHINGTON AND DISCUSS IT AGAIN WITH HIM UPON MY RETURN. I SAID I WOULD DO SO, AND SUGGESTED THAT HE DISCUSS IT ALSO WITH THE SECRETARY WHEN HE IS HERE.

16. COMMENT: THIS IS THE MOST EXPLICIT STATEMENT WE HAVE HAD THAT ISRAELI FORCES ARE OPERATING AT TIMES IN SOUTH LEBANON. I BELIEVE THAT DAYAN'S FRANKNESS UNDERLINES THE URGENCY HE FEELS ABOUT THE NEED FOR US TO DISCUSS THIS PROBLEM TOGETHER. I SHARE HIS CONCERN AND HOPE THAT WE

WILL BE PREPARED FOR A THOROUGH DISCUSSION OF THE
SUBJECT WHILE BEGIN IS IN WASHINGTON.
LEWIS

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